



Local Government for Langton Green, Speldhurst, Ashurst and Old Groombridge

Minutes of a Planning Committee Meeting held on Wednesday 8th November at 8.12pm in the Gallery Room, Langton Green Village Hall

MEMBERS PRESENT: Cllrs Mrs Price (Chairman), Parker, Mercieca, Allen, Mrs Jeffreys, Ellery, Kerby and Mrs Soyke

OFFICER PRESENT: Mrs K Harman – Assistant Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr Mrs Podbury, Mr C May – Clerk. Both left the meeting at 8.48pm.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: There was one member of the public present.

1. **To enquire if anyone present intends to film, photograph and/or record the meeting:** No-one present intended to film, photograph and/or record the meeting.
2. **To receive and approve apologies and reasons for absence:** There were none.
3. **Disclosure of Interests:** Cllr Mrs Soyke declared an interest in item no. 9, application no. 17/03403/FULL.
4. **Declarations of Lobbying:** There were none.
5. **Minutes: RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on **11th October 2017** be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.
6. **Matters Arising:** The Assistant Clerk said that she had received an email from a resident of Barden Road in Speldhurst regarding a head-on collision on Barden Road on Friday 20th October which had resulted in the road being closed for several hours. The accident was close to where the suggested access would be if the application to develop Scriventon Farm is allowed.
7. **Public Open Session** –There was one member of the public present, Mr David Rusbridge whose family own Jockey Farm and he is Vice Chairman of Rusthall Football Club. He was objecting to application no. 17/03403/FULL – Recreation Ground, Southwood Road, Rusthall.

Mr Rusbridge explained how this application would affect his land and business including, in summary the following points:

His family has owned Jockey Farm since 1925 and at no point have they been informed of a change of use or ownership of the farmland and fields.

He believes the application, if allowed, would affect the short and long-term viability of his farm and business.

Access to his fields would be severely restricted.

The fields in question get extremely wet and boggy during the winter months which would make them unsuitable for winter matches unless an expensive drainage and aeration system was installed.

Last season all home games for Rusthall Football Club were played at their grounds without the need to hire council facilities. Additionally, adult football is in decline with several of the local leagues closing down. This would indicate that there is no longer the demand for further facilities.

Existing car parking facilities are inadequate and overflow into the surrounding narrow residential streets and the High Street, choking up traffic flow. Additional pitches would only make this situation a lot worse.

Mr May gave an example of West Kent Sunday Football League which has gone from having 7 leagues to only 3 which indicates that requirement is diminishing, and the demand identified in 2006 is no longer appropriate.

Cllr Mrs Price said that the need for these pitches is based on 2006 research for Tunbridge Wells as a whole (not just Rusthall) and that planning guidance has changed with the introduction of the NPPF. Cllr Mrs Price went on to say that current TWBC research into the need for pitches is underway but not completed.

Councillors agreed that the discussion regarding application no. 17/03403/FULL could be brought forward to avoid Mr Rusbridge having to wait whilst other applications were discussed.

8. Planning appeals – There were none.

9. Planning applications for discussion and decision:

17/03403/FULL

Location: Recreation Ground, Southwood Road, Rusthall, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent

Proposal: Change of use of land to expand existing recreational facilities through provision of additional sports pitches, together with associated additional car parking provision, 'ball stop' fencing, and ground works.

Decision: SPC objects on the grounds that we believe the application should be withdrawn until new research showing the need established in 2006 still exists. There is no up to date evidence that these pitches are required and word of mouth is that the adult level of participation has dropped dramatically. We object to the enforced loss of agricultural land which would affect the viability of this long established rural farm. The development would affect the landowner's access to parts of the land. Even if new research establishes a need for

new pitches in Tunbridge Wells, we believe this is the wrong location, for the following reasons: -

Parking - the impact of such a large facility in a residential area would have a detrimental effect on a large number of the surrounding residents in terms of traffic congestion and overflow parking on narrow roads. Rusthall is already recognised as a bottle neck. We consider the parking provision to be inadequate and poorly designed being narrow and having no provision for coaches.

Drainage is poor which will severely limit winter use as the ground becomes water logged. It is not clear what provision would need to be made for drainage and the effect this would have on the surrounding farmland.

17/03202/FULL

Location: Cobblers Cottage, Leggs Lane, Speldhurst, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0RG

Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03262/FULL

Location: 3 Hither Chantlers, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0BJ

Proposal: Erection of a part two storey, part single storey side and rear extension, replacement roof over existing side infill and other external alterations.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03200/FULL

Location: 29 Salisbury Road, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0ES

Proposal: Single-storey side extension, first floor rear extension and 2 No. first floor side facing windows.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03408/LDCEX

Location: Speeds Farm, Farnham Lane, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0JT

Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) – Use of building for repair of vehicle engines.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03406/LDCEX

Location: Speeds Farm, Farnham Lane, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0JT

Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) – Use of building for storage and repair of motor vehicles.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03407/LDCEX

Location: Speeds Farm, Farnham Lane, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0JT

Proposal: Lawful Development Certificate (Existing) – Use of building for livery purposes.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/02892/FULL

Location: Herons Oast Farm, Speldhurst Road, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0JW

Proposal: Relocation of garden buildings.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/02892/FULL

Location: Herons Oast Farm, Speldhurst Road, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0JW

Proposal: Relocation of garden building

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03352/FULL

Location: 1 Holmewood Ridge, Langton Green, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0BG

Proposal: Replace 1.2m high boundary fence with 1.8m high close boarded fence with round top posts, counter rails and capping.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Planning Officer.

17/03355/LBC

Location: Danemore Farm, Leggs Lane, Speldhurst, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0RH

Proposal: Listed Building Consent – Demolition of existing timber framed and clad storage building, removal of existing concrete base and construction of new stable block onto new structural concrete base, within curtilage of the grade II listed building Danemore Park.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Conservation Officer.

17/03540/TPO

Location: Cedars, Hither Chantlers, Langton Green, Royal Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN3 0BJ

Proposal: Trees: Beech (T27)- Top out 10ft to take weight out; Birch (T24) – Take weight out the ends of the long branches.

Decision: SPC remains neutral – leave to Tree Officer.

10. Call for Sites – there was nothing to discuss and Cllr Mrs Price asked for this item to be removed from future agendas until further notice.

11. To Agree a Vice-Chairman – It was **RESOLVED** that Cllr Mercieca would become Vice Chairman to the Planning Committee.

12. Items for information –

- The Assistant Clerk asked Councillors for their views on the paperless planning trial which had been held during October. Councillors agreed that SPC should proceed on a paperless basis with the Assistant Clerk printing plans and information as required and with the use of the new laptop to look up information during meetings.
- Cllr Kerby advised that Burrowswood management are hoping to convene a meeting with Groombridge residents regarding the new signage.

Date of the next meeting-

- Wednesday 29th November in the Council Offices. Cllr Mrs Jeffreys gave her apologies as she already had a previous engagement.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Chairman